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*Americanization  
of the Finnish People  
In Houghton County,  
Michigan*





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AMERICANIZATION OF THE  
FINNISH PEOPLE IN  
HOUGHTON COUNTY,  
MICHIGAN

By  
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Published by  
THE FINNISH DAILY PUBLISHING CO.,  
Duluth, Minnesota 1921

318 Michigan

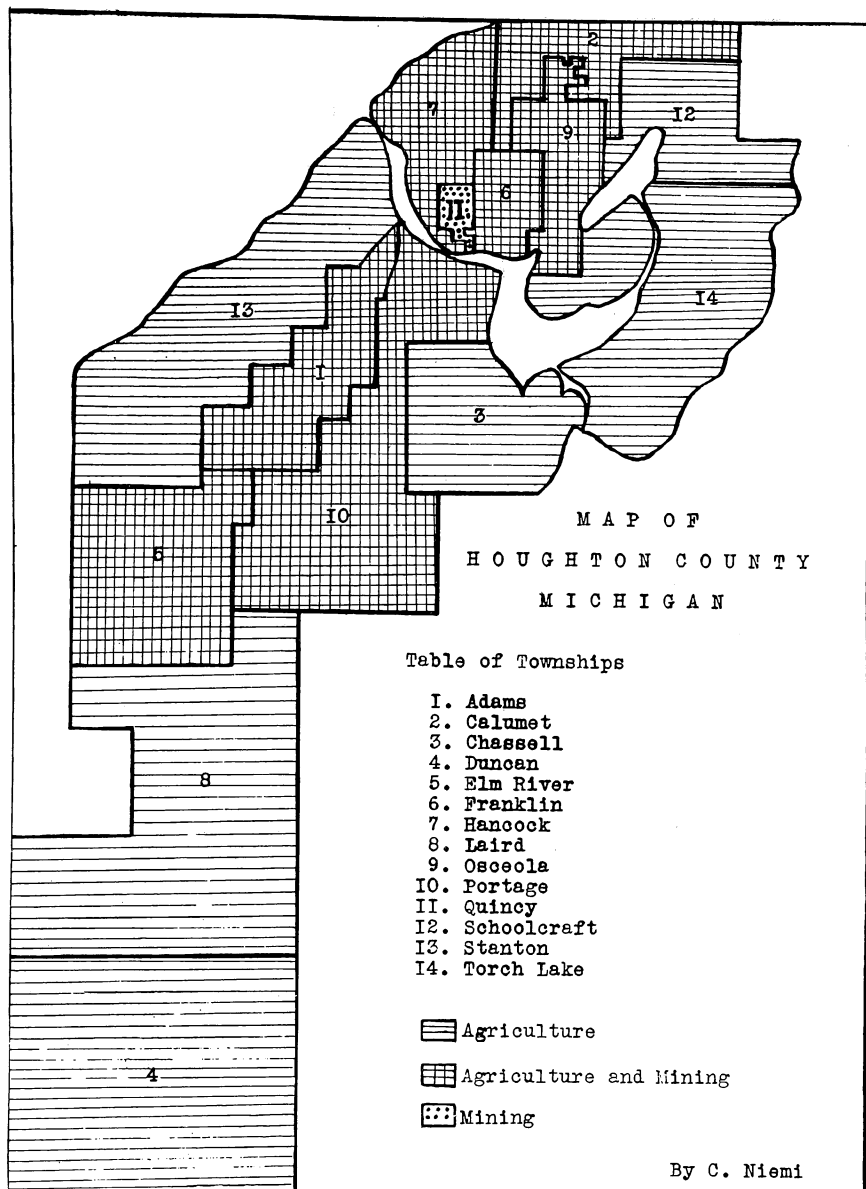


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This map shows the distributive aspect of occupations in different townships

# AMERICANIZATION OF THE FINNISH PEOPLE IN HOUGHTON COUNTY, MICHIGAN.

## I.

### MEANING OF AMERICANIZATION.

An ever increasing inflow of various nationalities has made us face the problem of Americanization. Attempts have been made to get into the vitals of the problem, and each social dilettante also coping with the situation has attempted to define Americanism according to his geographic area or social *milieu*. Moreover, many of American birth and ancestry permit themselves to be egoistic, intolerant, domineering and autocratic in their conception of Americanism, indifferent to those treasures of heritage which the foreign born continually bring to our shores in rich abundance.<sup>1</sup> They often assume that "different" means "inferior", and they are too apt to put on a cloak of superiority and to erect a barrier of contempt and intolerance.<sup>2</sup>

Without attempting to formulate an inclusive definition for the process of Americanization, it may be briefly stated to include a participation in all aspects of American life. This common sharing is possible and becomes real only when the spirit of democracy stands at the bottom of all our endeavors. The interpretation of the process is so wide in its scope, so far reaching that it embraces not only the preservation of the long cherished American principles, but also the acquisition of the best ideals and contributions brought from other countries. Industrially, then, Americanization would mean the maintenance of normal working conditions and impartial treatment of the newcomer so that he may have the opportunity to develop himself into a productive member of the society; economically, a just reward for his labor to make a decent living thus enabling him to modify his ways according to the American standards; socially, neighborliness as expressed in tolerant interchange of ideals and the establishment of reciprocal confidence between the newcomer and the native born; politically, the exercising of his rights as a citizen irrespective of birth, color, or creed. Americanization as conceived in this broad sense is principally a *sponte sua* process, although its various mechanisms such as the public

1. W. Talbot, *Americanization*, p. 58.

2. *Scientific American* 118:562, June, 1918.

school, the library, the industrial plants and others as long as they make the acquisition of new customs painless for the newcomer, may greatly facilitate it. Americanization, furthermore, lays more emphasis on the future rather than on the past; it is "perpetual becoming" always striving toward the goal of higher perfection. "As Americans if we could but grasp the elementary fact that Americanism is always partial and incomplete, an ideal to be sought but never fully to be attained because always in its perfection just beyond our reach, how much better Americans might we ourselves become, and how far more potent missionaries of the gospel of Americanism would we be. If our newcomers, too, could but realize that Americanism ever is to be, and that they are helping in its making, their enthusiasm would be strengthened, not shattered, and their power to contribute extended."<sup>1</sup>

The acceptance of one language as an instrument of speech and undivided loyalty to America are indispensable for the newcomer in the process of adaptation. But these are means, not ends in Americanization. Only when he participates in spirit as well as in deed and activities of the land of his adoption he is Americanized.

This study endeavors in a popular fashion to give a partial analysis of the native institutions of the Finnish people and other forces as well as the mechanisms in the assimilation process by which the newcomer is trying to react or readjust himself to the new conditions.

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1. W. Talbot, *Americanization*, p. 2.



## II.

## CAUSES OF IMMIGRATION.

Historical records show that as nearly as seventeenth century (about 1627) the first Finnish settlers together with the Scandinavian expedition landed on the American shore and planted a colony on the Delaware River, a short distance west of the City of Philadelphia. These early settlers were completely assimilated with the American people. Later on many sailors and adventurers came to this side and took their places of sojourn in cities known as centers of navigation or either they retired to live in the country. Quite a few newcomers were induced to migrate here by the gold rush of 1849 in California. But all of these were mere occasional adventurers and in the true sense of the word we cannot regard them to be real immigrants.

It was not until about 1861 that we might say the actual immigration from Finland to have begun. At this time, according to the old settlers, a group of Finns from Sweden and Norway where they had been engaged in mining and fishing, arrived at Houghton County. These pathfinders came from northern Finland originally and they were followed by their friends and relatives.

The subsequent years have witnessed a steady influx of the Finnish immigration from northern Finland. The reasons were many and varied. In the first place, agriculture in northern Finland was constantly impeded by the destruction of crops by frequent frosts. One cold night often played an appalling havoc on the soil tiller; all his work, his year's toiling was in vain. But in many cases, in spite of his struggle against harsh forces of nature, he did not fall into despair. He, like the peasant Paavo of Saarijärvi, ploughed his land, sowed it. And when the springtime came, the melting snowdrifts drenched the fields ruining half of the young crop. Summer came and descending hailstorms dashed the early ears down, half destroying them. Autumn came and the frost blasted the remnants of the crop. Now Paavo's wife tore her hair and spoke:

"Paavo, Paavo! man, the most unhappy,  
Take thy staff; by God we are forsaken;  
Hard it is to beg; to starve is harder!"  
Paavo took her by hand, and thus he answered:  
"God doth try his servant, not forsake him.  
Bread made half of bark must suffice us!

I will dig the dikes of twofold deepness,  
But from God will I await the increase!"

These pathetic lines suffice to give us a clear picture of the conditions of the peasant. His faith was not undermined by the harshness of nature, nor his hopes were shattered by misfortunes. And finally, when he miraculously won a victory over nature he went on expressing his tribute of gratitude:

"God hath only tried us, not forsaken!"  
On her knees his wife fell, and thus said she:  
"God hath only tried us, not forsaken!"  
And then gladly spake she to her husband;  
"Paavo, Paavo, take with joy the sickle;  
We may now make glad our hearts with plenty.  
Now may throw away the bark unsavory,  
And bake rich, sweet bread of ryemeal only!"  
Paavo took her hand in his and answered:  
"Woman, woman! It is but sent to try us,  
If we will have pity on the sufferer,  
Mix thou bark with corn even as aforetime,  
Frosts have killed the harvest of our neighbors!"

He was satisfied with the little he had. He toiled without getting sufficient rewards for his labor. As farming was the principal means of sustenance and as one bad year followed another economic distress increased accordingly. No wonder that this industrious soil tiller whom severe nature had made vigorous, had given endurance, was now anxious to leave his native country, to try his luck here. Moreover, economic betterment in America was said to be easier. It was this country that was his last hope.

But there was still another reason for immigration just as weighty as the preceding one. In 1809 Finland came under the domination of Russian government. Historically, Finland was a separate nation with definite boundaries, its laws, its monetary and school system. At the time of annexation Alexander I solemnly promised to preserve Finnish constitution, laws and institutions. Despite these facts Russian reactionaries who with jealousy watched the progress of Finland, started an argument on the ground that Finland was a Russian province and not an independent nation, and that Finland had no right to its autonomy and independent existence. Finland was to be Russified at any cost, so the Russian autocrats asserted. The constitution of Finland was now, in their opinions, a mere scrap of paper, its institutions were to be infused with Slavic culture, democracy was to be replaced by tyranny under the surveillance of Russian gendarmes. Innocent citizens who ventured to voice their opinions against Russian encroachment upon their personal rights and those of their country, were thrown into prisons or

exiled. Thus a ceaseless fight for freedom was waged between the two countries, on one side a small progressive nation with western culture and institutions, on the other side a huge mass of people reared in ignorance and superstition under the iron sceptre of the Czar. This incessant struggle developed national consciousness in Finland; it furnished new inspiration for cultural attainments and national progress. There were many who with fortitude faced Russian oppression, who despite the frequent frosts, bitter memories of devastations by war and appalling plagues, were ready to offer their lives for their native country. Finally the political pressure became more and more intolerable and many patriotic citizens were now reluctantly inclined to believe that Russia would gradually absorb their country; they were compelled to seek place of refuge elsewhere. Many were exiled to Siberia, more fled to Scandinavia and other countries, but most numerous was that group of "pilgrims" who migrated to America, "the Land of the Free." On their arrival at this side of the Atlantic many of them naturally were attracted to the northwestern states. The climate and seasonal changes here showed much similarity with those of Finland. Also in this section of the country there was very little difference in the sort of vegetation and in the nature of the soil. Thus, in a brief resume it may be stated that the desire for new experience, but above all, the economic and political pressure were the principal causes why the Finnish immigration was directed to America, and especially to the northwestern states on account of their geographic position.



## III.

## ATTITUDE TOWARD AMERICAN LIFE.

We all have tendency to idealize impressive personalities who have either written books or composed music or other persons of fame who by their works have approached the innermost labyrinths of our nature. This analogy holds true of the immigrant also. He has idealized America, its great men before entering this side of the Atlantic. He has heard many stories about America, has pictured it to be a land of democracy, of freedom, of equality with no class distinction. No one would inquire here about his ancestry; his integrity, his character would only decide his future career. He, also, has imagined how easily he could make his living here, even a "fortune" like so many of his friends he knew. But what did he find here upon his arrival? Stern reality faced him; he found himself in a new environment, in a new social *milieu*. He wondered, he stared at the magnificent skyscrapers, at the restless, furiously moving throngs that changed streets and avenues of American cosmopolitan cities into throbbing arteries.

And when he traveled farther inland to meet his friends or relatives he arrived at a tiny mining village or town in which the shrieking whistles blew their tragic welcome. Now he had a general view of America he had so many times dreamed of.

After he had worked a few days he was ready to express his first impressions about America. "I had imagined America to be a beautiful country where aesthetic qualities are on a par with money," said a woman who had come here about twelve years ago. "At once on my arrival I was bitterly disappointed when I reached this mining town. The companies had heaped recklessly mountain-like rock piles in the neighborhood of residence sections. In addition, one could see miserable looking miners' huts scattered all along the muddy alleys and roads. As I contrasted conditions here with those in my native country I began to cry. I wept, I felt lonesome for days, weeks and months before I got used to the new surroundings. I would have gone back to Finland had I had money enough to buy my transportation ticket. But now it is different. I am used to all this. I have raised my children here and for their sake I will stay in America . . ." This woman had received a fairly good education in the old country.

Another woman who had gone through many hardships in Finland, said: "I came to stay with my daughter, but found everything disagreeable. The language, customs, food, in fact all seemed to be so strange that I thought

to myself I would never remain here. I had missed my friends and relatives. I felt lonesome and would often burst into tears. I begged that I might go back to my home country, but all my imploring was in vain. Finally when nobody seemed to pay any attention to my crying I had to stop it myself. I have stayed with my daughter and now I feel perfectly at home. I am so glad after all that I came here. We have plenty of wholesome food and everything we need."

A man engaging in mining added: "I, as so many immigrants, had somewhat lonesome days on my arrival here. It was my inability to talk the English language that caused all the trouble. I thought I would not stay here very long, that as soon as I had earned enough money I would leave this country. I often remembered my friends with whom I had grown up. It seemed to be impossible to live here among strange people, to starve from the lack of congenial companionship. But as I had made nice savings and was about to depart I stopped to think a while. I asked myself why I should leave so soon? I had learned a few words, had learned to eat American dishes, to dress like Americans. In the true sense of the word America and I were now more intimate friends. I decided to remain here one more year. I did so and after that period I paid a visit to Finland, but found condition there so different that I could no longer tolerate their existing social order and that sharp class distinction. I soon left back for America." A successful business man continued: "I came here to stay. First when I came here I worked in a mine. Then I started my business career and I am satisfied. No old country for me!"

All the interviews I had with these early settlers reflected, with a few exceptions, the same idea: America, because of its strange language, customs, first made somewhat disappointing impression on me, and to stay here longer seemed almost impossible.

But within a year or so his attitude toward American life became greatly modified. He learned to stammer a few broken words or phrases of the language and now the biggest of all the obstacles to cordial friendship between him and America was about to crumble down. The writer was told many times that one's inability to converse in the English language caused more hardships to the immigrant than any other factor. He, also, was economically better off here. Dishes which were regarded as luxuries in the old country were here every day necessities. He had liberal spending money in his pocket. He became acquainted with the American ways of doing things. He occasionally visited libraries, schools and other institutions, participated in the Fourth of July parade, watched how Americans celebrated their national holidays in public parks and there he bought an ice cream cone or pop, or he attended the movies. All these created in him a desire to be like Americans. Gradually new traditions, new customs displaced the old ones and a peculiar dualism—a combination of the old and

new ideals, recollections, convictions, experiences and sentiments filled his mind. Those values which, because of their intrinsic qualities, were of immediate benefit to him in his new environment, gained dominance over the old values. Now he began to see America in a different light. "How proud I feel to be a naturalized American citizen!" exclaimed a young man who had come here under the age of nineteen and who was attending university. "When I arrived in America I thought I had done very foolishly to leave my native country whose blue lakes and rippling silvery creeks I loved so much. When I came to this side of the Atlantic I hoped so heartily that immigration authorities would turn me back to my native country. I realized what a mistake I had made. My inability to talk the English language made me sensitive. I looked to the American institutions with prejudice so long as I was ignorant about them and the whole American life loomed before my eyes as one unsolvable, obscure puzzle. But as I learned the language, learned to read American newspapers, became acquainted with American schools and other institutions, my attitude was changed. My sensitiveness disappeared, memories of my old country gradually vanished from my mind. My thoughts were more centered in this country and on my personal affairs as to how I could adapt myself the quickest possible way to the new environment. I was ready to draw my conclusions on public questions discussed in newspapers. Now I felt I was a part of this great democratic nation which I had so many times idealized. I felt I was unconsciously converted into Americanism through various steps.

"And when I visited art museums, city libraries, state capitols, universities, or when I attended patriotic meetings where "America" or "The Star Spangled Banner" were sung or played, I felt that unexplainable, lofty spirit of patriotism seize me. American traditions and history became clarified and I could distinctly picture before my eyes those brave forefathers of this country who stood for inalienable rights of mankind, who fought and fell bravely for the principles of humanity. Now America is all to me. Only like a flash of lightning old memories of the native country at times penetrate my mind, but they are ephemeral. The traditions of the old country are of secondary importance to me . . . ."

These excerpts from the life histories of those interviewed indicate clearly what the newcomer's attitude toward American life was and how this attitude was gradually changed. What, then, were the Americanizing forces that initiated this change? They were economic betterment that found immediate response in the attitude of the immigrant, the limited knowledge of the language—a few broken words or phrases enabled him to participate in American life, and finally accidental or occasional contact with American institutions. These forces accelerated Americanization process unconsciously.



## IV.

## ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.

The former occupation of the newcomer induces later ones to engage in the same industry. Nationalist organizations also seem to act as aggregating forces in the adoption of a new form of work. The nature of these institutions in turn tends to select newcomers into certain economic groups according to their "likemindedness." Thus those holding religious views tend to assemble in localities where they can participate in religious activities, irrespective as to whether the main occupation is mining, agriculture or trade. In the same way those holding materialistic view of life or the so-called socialists tend to become segregated in communities of a dominant economic type.

When the first Finnish settler came to Houghton county mining was the only occupation open to him. The land, then, was densely wooded and unavailable for agriculture. To earn his livelihood he was forced to engage in mining industry. He was physically qualified for the work. On account of his thrifty habits, of his endurance, he was liked by the employer.

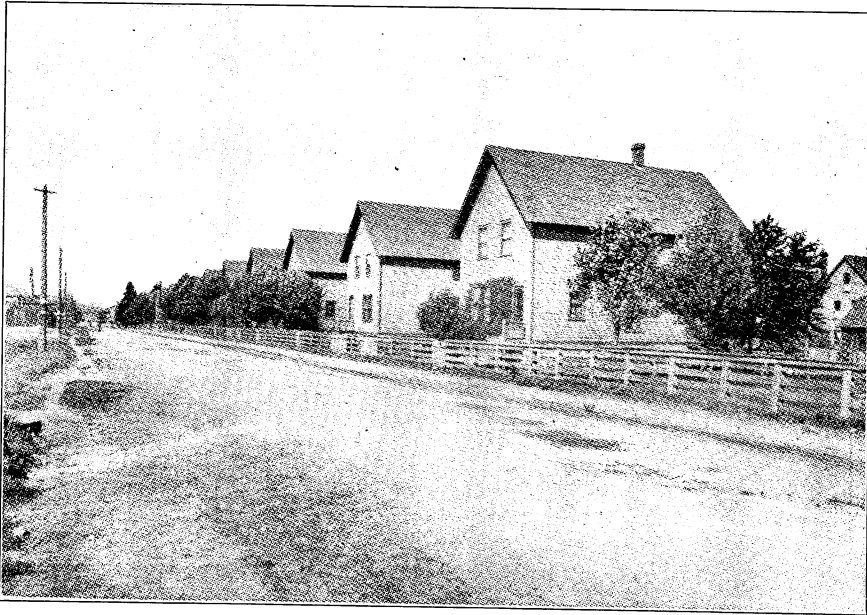


Fig. 1—A typical mining location, Calumet, Michigan.

As soon as he entered his service he was under the tutelage of the company. His very existence depended upon it. The company furnished him a dwelling which was a different sort of house from that he used to live in, (Fig. 1). Its furnitures, heating apparatus, windows, doors were different. He attempted to apply old ways of living to his new environment, but before long he discovered them to be impracticable. Now the question of adaptation faced him seriously for the first time and in order to live with comfort he partly modified his ways of living according to the American standards.

And when he started to work he clothed himself in a heavy miner's attire, put on heavy, durable hobnail or rubber boots and his oil hat on which was attached a tiny, twinkling lamp. Now he descended in a skip down the murky shaft thousands of feet into the dismal bowels of the earth, (Fig. 2 and 3). The moist, raw air whistled in his ears, thrilling his whole body as

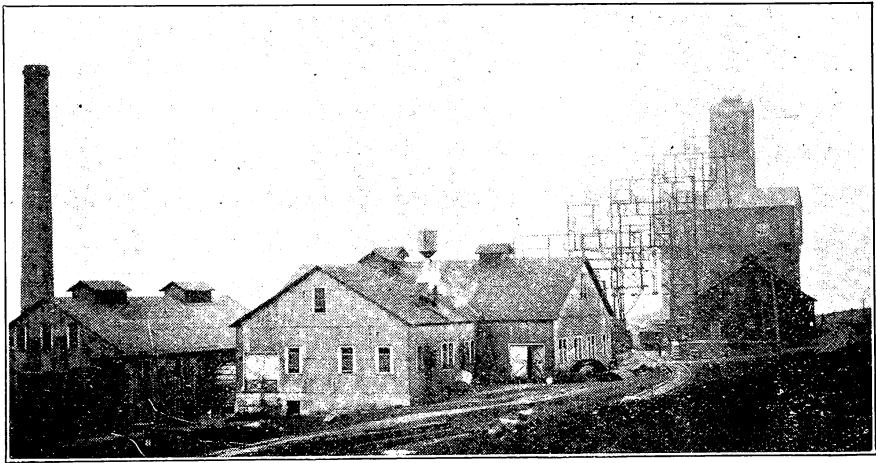


Fig. 2—Hancock copper mine, Hancock, Michigan.

the skip went down. It was here that he was truly baptized into "real Americanism." Here he was thrown into a group of heterogeneous co-workers. Here he faced the same experiences, same dangers, same rules and regulations with his fellow workers. He learned to appreciate their co-operation. And while he was engaged in the team work national barriers, even race prejudice gradually disappeared from his mind. He took a broader attitude toward life and he desired to think and to act like the rest of the group. Thus the change of environment, working conditions, dress tended to destroy his old habits and customs.

These Americanizing forces were only partial. There were others just as important. When he noticed the rapid development of American mining industry, skillful application of latest machinery and implements such as the compressed air drill, or the trammer's car with its automatic devices, all of

these aroused his admiration, one by one, cut the ties that attached him to his native country, accelerated his Americanization. He found out that there was a great gap between the industrial development of his native country and that of America. He even went so far as not to grant due credit to his home country for what it deserved.

The magnitude of the industrial development, then, partly impressed him to modify his habits and ways of thinking. He, also, learned the every day "miner's language" pronouncing, declining and conjugating American words like those of his own language. Thus the word mine, for instance, became "maini"; boss, "paasi"; trammer, "trammari"; skip, "skippa"; car, "kaara"; dinner, "dinneri"; store, "stoori", etc. Later on as his ear learned to catch the right pronunciation his language became more fluent. At any

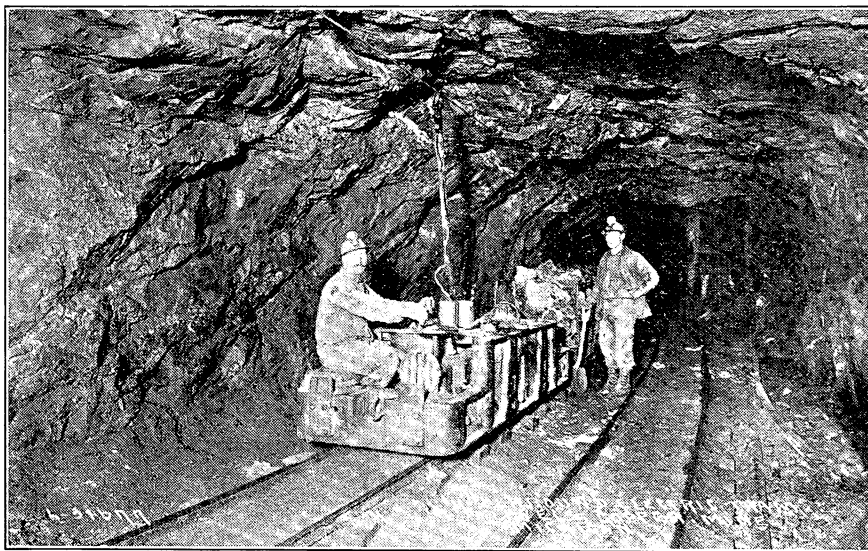


Fig. 3—Underground electric tram in one of the copper mines.

rate he was glad that he was able to express his thoughts to his boss or to his fellow workers.

However primitive these Americanizing forces they have, nevertheless, modified his ideals, his ways of thinking, his *modus vivendi*. To tell the truth we must admit that mining districts, in general, have not been ideal places for the training of the immigrant for good citizenship. In many mining villages vulgarity and ignorance prevailed everywhere. The employer took the *laissez-faire* policy toward the newcomer and the latter often became a mere catspaw of his shrewd exploiter in attaining his ends.

Whatever the working conditions or how limited the contact with real American life, one can candidly infer that the Finn has been among those

in the first rank to adapt himself to the new environment. This is witnessed by the fact that he has acquired a fairly understandable command of the English language and in dress and manners he is as American as one would expect him under such circumstances. Many even have preferred to work for long periods underground as shown by the figures of the Calumet and Hecla Mining Company which, in its Semi-Centennial Celebration held July 15, 1916, presented medals to those employees who had been connected with the company from periods ranging from fifty years down to twenty years. Among the old employees the writer was able to detect the following Finns:<sup>1</sup> those who had been in service of the company over forty years received Gold Medal, five; the recipients of Silver Medal in service between thirty and forty years, sixteen; the recipients of Bronze Medal in service of the company between twenty and thirty years, forty-two. These veterans, if one takes the trouble of conversing with them, appear to be so thoroughly attached to this country, at least in spirit, that poor Finland does not seem to possess anything worth while.

The preceding figures, nevertheless, should not impress us with the idea that the Finn is a miner and that mining is his favorite work. As already implied he worked in a mine because he was compelled to earn his livelihood that way. He is the lover of land by nature and mining was an intermediary step in attaining his goal. As soon as he saved enough money to purchase a piece of land he left mining and his former occupation became his temporary means of sustenance in case of emergency. Or if he did not go back into the mine, as he ran short of money, he worked as a common laborer, or else went into the woods to work as a "lumberjack." Since he was extremely individualistic he wanted to be his own boss.

While in the employment of the company he cultivated a piece of land belonging to the company. He paid little or no rent for it. Then homestead lands were available and finally extensive holdings of various companies, as soon as virgin timber was removed, were opened for the settlers. Why did the Finn buy these lands? To answer briefly—because the soil was boulder-strewn and he was adapted to cultivate this sort of land under various handicaps. To remove the stumps, the underbrush, and boulders left behind after the timber was cut down, required enormous efforts and great perseverance. The Finn came to stay here and he made up his mind to make a farm for himself at any cost. Although he knew it would take years before he could get any rewards for his labor, but he was willing to wait, for he did not wish to spoil his work in a cursory manner.

One homesteader who came here at the age of fifteen and who had been in this country over thirty years told about his experiences: "My father had filed an application for a homestead in the neighborhood of

1. Semi-Centennial Issue of the Calumet and Hecla Mining Company, July 15, 1916. The figures may be incomplete.

Otter Lake. As the soil was fertile he urged me to put in my application also. I did so and it was accepted. The times were different then from what they are now. There was no road to the homestead. The nearest road was about three miles from my land. I carried or dragged all our food stuffs and whatever we needed. For my first trip I took enough food supplies to last for a year so that I might go on with my work without interruption. We laid our belongings, all we had under a fir tree until I built a modest shack. Here we cleared the forest, we went through many ordeals. My incessant toilings were finally rewarded. The dense forest gave way to civilization and beautiful farm arose in place of wilderness."

Among the first buildings is a log cabin or a simple frame dwelling with one or two rooms. There is also the bathhouse which is just as valuable to the Finn as a hospital is to the sick. There are also a cow stable, a hay barn, a wood shed, a cellar dug in the ground. All these buildings except the bathhouse and the cellar are more or less constructed after the American pattern. Later on as he gains economic independence these old buildings are either remodeled or reconstructed after the latest American style.

During the last ten years the number of Finnish farmers has increased rapidly and agriculture has become yearly a more important and prominent industry. "About 80 per cent of the farmers in the county are Finns and the rest or 20 per cent of whom 15 per cent are French, is becoming swiftly absorbed by the Finn. I can confidently say that within ten years period 90 per cent of the farmers will be Finns. Reasons for my prediction are: the Finn is used to work, he is not afraid to tackle the hardest kind of work. The native born farmer seeks easier and more favorable farming conditions. The Frenchman stays on his farm only so long as there is timber land, the Dutch and the Belgian are not used to such a trying land clearing and handicaps. The Finn is the only hope. Besides Finnish boys and girls are taught to work on the farm."<sup>1</sup>

In the methods of farming the Finn may have a penchant to some extent to cling to his old customs. Some of these still survive. He may, for instance, cure his grain or hay on driers or use old methods in tilling the soil and in sowing seeds and reaping the crop. The unfortunate characteristic of his mind is his doggedness, and suspicion of innovation. It may take quite a while to convince him about a certain thing, but as soon as his incredulity is disposed of he is apt to go to the extreme. He may, for instance, buy machinery that he does not need on his farm.

The principal crops are hay, potatoes, oats, wheat, barley, rye, turnips and some vegetables. On every farm there is a fruit orchard. The number of cows, horses and poultry varies according to the size of the farm. In some sections 90 acres, in some townships 40 acres is the average size.

1. According to Mr. L. M. Geismar, Houghton County Agricultural Agent.



Table 1 gives representative figures<sup>1</sup> as to what extent farming has been carried on by the Finns in the county. They are sufficient to indicate that many of the mining communities apparently will be changed into self-sufficing agricultural communities. The map on page 6 also shows the distributive aspect of occupations in different townships.

TABLE I.

Showing townships, the number of acres, their assessed valuation and real property owned by the Finns in Houghton County.

Township	No. of Acres	Assessed Valuation	Real Property
Adams -----	661	\$ 9,915	\$142,280
Calumet -----	1,707	17,070	432,950
Chassell -----	5,213	130,325	9,225
Duncan -----	1,356	13,560	3,650
Elm River -----	1,015	15,225	2,000
Franklin -----	1,273	12,730	17,130
Hancock -----	3,552	88,800	213,265
Laird -----	10,702	234,040	-----
Osceola -----	1,648	24,720	16,450
Portage -----	12,802	320,050	37,000
Quincy (2) -----	-----	-----	-----
Schoolcraft -----	2,882	43,230	1,100
Stanton -----	18,893	472,325	-----
Torch Lake -----	5,182	51,820	1,240
Total -----	66,896	\$1,433,810	\$876,290

A great impetus toward modern farming methods has been started by the Grange movement under the leadership of Mr. L. M. Geismar and by the Agricultural School of Otter Lake (Fig. 4) in the center of a Finnish farming community. "The attendance (in school) which was small at first rapidly increased and during the past three years has ranged from 125 to upwards of 400. The wholesome influence of the school upon the whole community has been plainly visible since then. Trained in practical work of the farm and home, the boys and girls have gained in self-reliance (Fig. 5). They are wide awake and well behaved, clean and bright-eyed, as well dressed and facing an audience as composedly as any equal number of city children.

"The material progress in the community is no less conspicuous. Nearly every crop has been standardized, better houses and barns have been erected. Automobiles and motor trucks are owned by several, and more land has been cleared and brought under cultivation during the past four years than during the preceding fifteen. And, best of all, the community is becoming thoroughly Americanized, for stanza after stanza of our National anthems is now sung by young and old and every line has been

1. These figures are based on Assessment Records of 1917.  
2. Owned by the Quincy Mining Company.

learned by heart. While the war lasted, not one family in the community failed to bring to the principal of the school its monthly contribution towards Red Cross and other war relief work, and on one of the walls of the room used for monthly meetings there hung a large service flag with sixteen blue and one gold stars, thus bearing testimony to the allegiance of these foreign born people who chose America as their home and are ready to defend it with all they possess."<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, Mr. Geismar states that Finnish children do not like to talk their parents' language; they prefer English. Many of their parents, it is true, are unable to express themselves in the English language. But this language difficulty, it seems to me, is not a conclusive criterion by which

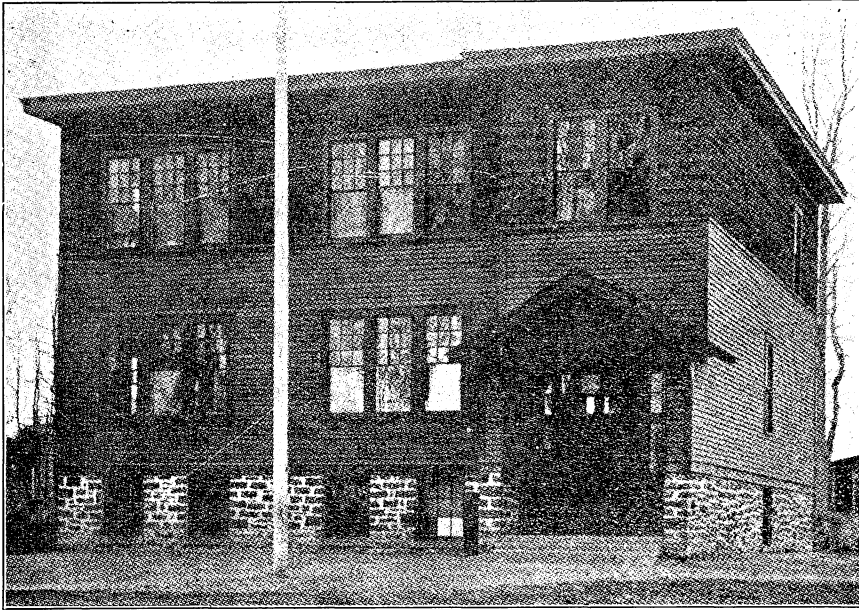


Fig. 4—Otter Lake Agricultural School located in a Finnish community first one of its kind in Michigan.

we should measure their Americanism. On the contrary, many of them seem to have attained a considerable degree of Americanization in spirit by obeying laws of the country and by not taking a licentious attitude toward interpreting the meaning of the word *liberty*. Many of these foreign born citizens, "although speaking no English . . . may yet be more truly Americanized than such a straight descendants of Pilgrim and Puritan stock as may have habits of thought and conduct which are undemocratic, intolerant, and unfraternal. Chance of birth and the fortune of

1. L. M. Geismar, the Otter Lake Agricultural School for Boys and Girls, Monograph p. 3.

inheritance may as easily keep from sharing in Americanism the Bostonian as the native of Bangkok."<sup>1</sup>

Besides farming some diverted their attention to business pursuits. Many of them did not have inherited capital to start with. Nevertheless, numerous successful business establishments are found in the county. Stores are clean, business methods American, reading, writing, and talking of the English language has become habitual for the businessman. However, the native language has retained its place in the store and each storekeeper tries to carry articles and delicacies of the old country and to advertise them in Finnish papers and other publications. There are always found one or two Finnish speaking clerks in the store. This same custom, perhaps, to accommodate Finnish patrons, is followed by American busi-



Fig. 5—A group of Finnish children, Otter Lake, Michigan.

ness houses. Dry goods stores, banks, grocery stores, and drug stores employ Finnish clerks and bookkeepers.

That some of these Finnish business concerns seem to have succeeded is shown by the fact that some houses transact business over \$300,000 worth annually. Through business activities the Finn has come sooner in close contact with American life and consequently, he seems to have adopted through this channel American ideals and customs more rapidly than by any other economic activity.

1. W. Talbot, *Americanization*, pp. 1, 2.

This survey of the adaptation of the Finnish group to his economic environment indicates that he has not only made the adjustments necessary for livelihood, but has adopted American methods of agriculture and business making for efficiency. His economic success in the United States has had a decisive part in developing loyalty to the United States. To what extent and in what way the Americanization forces have modified him through his religious institutions will be discussed in the following chapter.

## V.

## RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES.

The church segregates newcomers into ethnic groups so long as it adheres to old ceremonies and to the native language. The old system of ritualism holds together that group of individuals possessing approximately the same "apperception mass." Through social inheritance of religious ideals the church without changing its policy may for a certain length of time hold under its roof those who are inclined to "define the situation differently", for instance, the native born. So the first effect of the influence of the church appears to be opposed to Americanization. But as soon as the number of native born increases the church is compelled to adopt a compromising policy; it becomes an agent in the process of adaptation. In its attempt to keep the two groups of divergent mental attitudes together it becomes a positive agency for Americanization.

Houghton county was the birth place of organized religious activities among the Finnish people. About forty-three years ago the first Finnish Lutheran congregation was established in Calumet. Services were held in the same church with Norwegians and Swedes.<sup>1</sup> As the number of settlers increased congregations were established in other mining towns and villages. Different religious denominations also came into existence. They were the resultant of disputes over church polity, doctrines and leadership. Thus there were the Evangelical Lutherans, those belonging to the National Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Apostolical Lutherans. The first group is a branch of the State Church of Finland, the second a derivative of the former and the last one a religious sect having originated in northern Finland. When we add one group who call themselves Methodists we have covered all the important denominations that are functioning among the Finnish people in the county.

Why is it, one may ask, that there are so many religious organizations? To answer briefly: the partisanship in the church leadership, narrowmindedness, individualism and its accompanying uncompromising attitude, so characteristic of the Finnish mind, were the underlying causes. This extreme individualism has been his greatest weakness on one hand and his greatest strength on the other in the hour of trial. These causes have tended to undermine church activities, have resulted in unnecessary duplication of churches, congregations, halls, Sunday schools, ministers and parsonages.

1. Cf. V. Rautanen, *Amerikan Suomalainen kirkko*, pp. 35, 36.

They also have imposed needless expenditures upon the members. Table II shows comparative strength of various denominations. Most of the statistics are based on estimation and may not be complete. In addition, the Evangelical Lutheran Church or Suomi Synod owns eight halls which are used for the church services and Sunday and parochial school purposes (Fig. 6).

TABLE II.

Showing the number of denominations, churches, congregations, membership and ministers.<sup>1</sup>

Denominations	No. of Churches	Congregations	Members	Ministers
Ev. Luth. -----	11	14	5,702	3
Natl. Luth. -----	1	2	748	1
Apost. Luth. -----	9	10	1,675	2
Methodist -----	1	1	187	1
Total -----	22	27	8,312	7

Ministers in service of congregations, with a few exceptions, are educated in Finland. They preach in Finnish and services are much similar to those in the home country, or to those of the Lutheran Church of America. The use of the native tongue has been imperative in religious work on account of great number of those unable to understand the English language. Such use of the native tongue, no doubt, tends to perpetuate those thoughts, ideals and customs inherited from the home country.

What, then, has the church done to Americanize the newcomer in the land of his adoption? In the first place the action of the church has molded his morals, acted to check lawlessness and other un-Americanizing forces. The church has developed social solidarity, brought together the native born and the adult newcomer. Through such association he came in closer contact with American ideals, customs and ways of thinking. It is, one might add, due to the influence of the native born that many of the congregations are beginning to use the English language as a medium of exchange of thoughts in religious activities. The church also has accepted American methods for its financial support. It, furthermore, has acted as a medium in directing and concentrating the minds of its members on vital issues affecting the welfare and happiness of the American people. On Mothers' Day it has emphasized the importance of the home as fulcrum of existing social order and the mother's place in it. On national holidays, for instance, on Washington's birthday the church has laid stress on noble characters of America's leaders, on lofty ideals, on re-

1. According to the figures furnished in 1917 by the ministers of the various denominations.

spected and long cherished customs and traditions. Thus, the church as a bearer of moral standard, maintaining those principles and ideals—freedom of conscience, freedom for each individual to worship his God according to the dictates of his heart so long as his religious practices do not violate the laws of the country—upheld with reverence by the founders of this country, has made the newcomer a better citizen than what he would have been otherwise. We have only those Americanized religious ideals and traditions expressed or implied in the constitution of the United States. But in the narrowest sense of the word any church is American only when

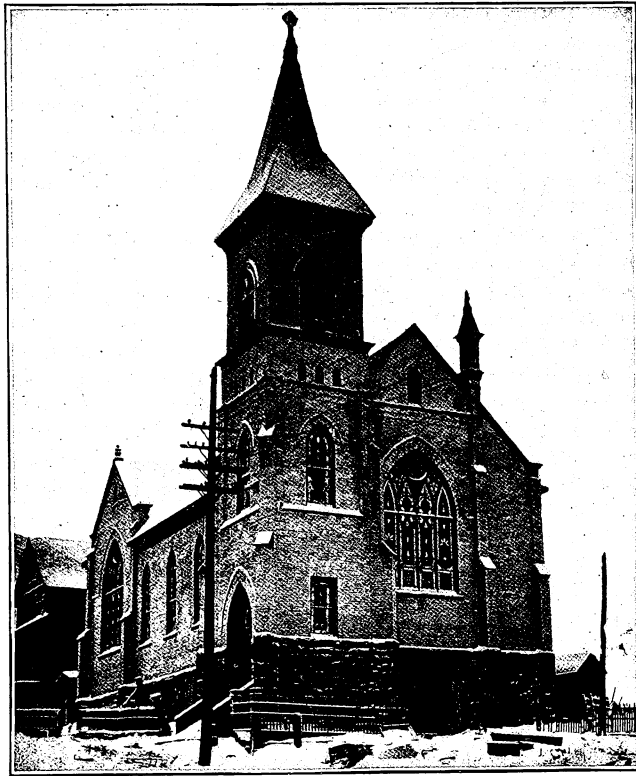


Fig. 6—Finnish Lutheran church, Hancock, Michigan.

its language together with its spirit is American. The complete use of the English language in the Finnish church is a matter of time.

The Young People's Societies grew up in connection with the church. They are modeled after the American Lutheran League.<sup>1</sup> Societies hold concerts and socials using proceeds either for its own benefit or that of the congregation. For recreational purposes young people arrange out-

1. Cf. Juhla-Albumi, Suomi Synoodin, 25-vuotisjuhlan muistoksi 1890-1915, pp. 120, 121.



door picnics, rowing excursions, and country walks. Meetings are held once or twice a month on Sunday evenings, business meetings on week day evenings. The program in the concert consists of speeches singing, recitations, poems, piano, violin or mandolin solos. The rendition of the program is preferred in the English language, although Finnish still retains its place. Since the native born form the dominating majority in the society one may infer with meticulous correctness, that this group is more thoroughly Americanized than any other organization. The pressure brought about by the native born has certainly proved to be a good eye opener for the adult newcomers as regards the language question. They have been forced to take cognizance of the fact that the English language will be required of all ministers to keep the young people in the church or they either will join some other denomination or else remain altogether outside of the church. Thus the Young People's Societies act as tremendous Americanizing force among the adult newcomer.

Sunday schools also as indicated by Table III are maintained by each denomination and some congregations even have parochial schools in the summer time lasting usually from one to two months. The language used in these schools is Finnish. Thus the child receives his religious education in the language of his parents. It is, then, one of the aims of these schools among the Finns as it is among Scandinavians and Germans, to preserve the parents' native language to their children. Many children, furthermore, grow up to the age of five with the speaking knowledge of Finnish alone, except a few English words he has learned from his playmates. This sort of situation is often due to the parents' inability to talk English.

TABLE III.

Showing denominations, the number of Sunday schools, teachers and pupils.

Denominations	Schools	Teachers	Pupils
Ev. Luth. -----	25	347	2,290
Natl. Luth. -----	2	9	120
Apost. Luth. 1 -----	8	60	250
Methodist 1 -----	1	10	75
Total -----	36	426	2,735

Curiously enough, as soon as these youngsters get into the public school and as they learn the English language they dislike to talk Finnish. It seems as though they had not been taught Finnish at all, as though all efforts to preserve the parents' language had been in vain. At home his answer to his father or mother comes in English.

1. Estimated figures.

This same disparaging attitude toward the Finnish language is shown by the children in Sunday and parochial schools. They talk the English language wherever they can evade the teacher's eye. It seems, therefore, evident that in spite of private efforts to perpetuate the native tongue which, no doubt would be a valuable asset to the child, the first generation is becoming so swiftly Americanized that to keep it under the influence of the church the use of the English language is imperative.

In what respect, then, Sunday schools have acted as medium of Americanization? In the first place most of them are modeled after the American system *i. e.*, classification of children according to their ages and mental development. American text books are used in some Sunday school teachers' training institutes. Furthermore, the action of the Sunday and parochial schools has been the same as that of the church, namely, development of the child's moral conduct. They have, also, brought together children of various social environments and the child with more advanced American customs no doubt, has impressed his classmate who perhaps, by some reason or other was somewhat backward in sharing American life. Denominational schools also have brought the young American and the adult newcomer into closer contact with one another and such association has resulted in changing the adult's viewpoint more to American standards. In brief, Young People's Society, denominational schools, and the church, in satisfying spiritual wants, have been forces of Americanization subjectively, although these institutions have made somewhat less rapid progress toward Americanization objectively. There are, in addition, other spiritual desires which seemed to have sought satisfaction through nationalist organizations, since the church took somewhat skeptical attitude toward them.

## VI.

## NATIONALIST ORGANIZATIONS.

Newcomers of the same nationality with common ideals and standards live in the same "universe of discourse." Consequently, nationalist organizations come partly into existence as means of social intercourse or reciprocal exchange of ideals, at least so long as the newcomer begins to interpret the data he comes in contact with on different grounds. From the point of view of their origin, therefore, they tend to perpetuate social attitudes of the old country. But in their development by adaptation to the new environment they may become Americanizing agencies.

There are two distinct types of nationalist institutions, the temperance society and the socialist society. In 1885 the foundation for the Pohjan Tähti (North Star) temperance association was laid. First meetings were held in a rented hall. As soon as the membership grew larger and a considerable sum of money collected a hall for the society was constructed.

A temperance hall itself is usually a very modest frame building one or two stories high (Fig. 7). The assembly hall forms the nucleus in it with a stage which is decorated with some painting depicting a scene from Finland or from some other country. There is also a kitchen used during socials for refreshments and coffee drinking. The society has its constitution and by-laws, total abstinence being the absolute requirement for membership. Each member pays a small fee.

The number of temperance associations has increased so rapidly that in 1917 there were sixteen halls in the county. The property value of these halls amounted to \$39,000 in round numbers. The membership has varied from about 2,000 to 1,000. The maintenance of these societies has imposed heavy financial sacrifices on the members, but at the same time has acted as a stimulus to greater social activity.

What were the underlying reasons for the foundation and survival of these societies? Was it drunkenness or special aptitude of the Finnish people to indulge in intoxicating liquors? It is true, one must admit that the use of alcoholic liquors was general among them in early days, just as it was common in other immigrant groups. About thirty years ago more or less frontier life prevailed in these mining communities. The moral level was low, national animosities and occasional quarrels between different racial groups caused a great deal of trouble. The Finnish miner, of course, being an excessive drinker, was also embroiled in many squabbles. His

boisterous conduct while intoxicated led him into the hands of an officer. Often the cause of trouble was unknown, but since he was unable to speak the English language he was compelled to bear the brunt of the burden. To rescue those who were addicted to alcoholic beverages and to mitigate the poignant sufferings of their relatives in the old country were the two principal aims of the temperance society.

The leisure time problem was another reason for its existence. He was in a new environment engaged in routine work in an unattractive mining village. He had no place, except his crowded lodging house or places of commercialized recreation where he might spend his leisure time. Thus in response to his potential wants to counterbalance old and new ideals,

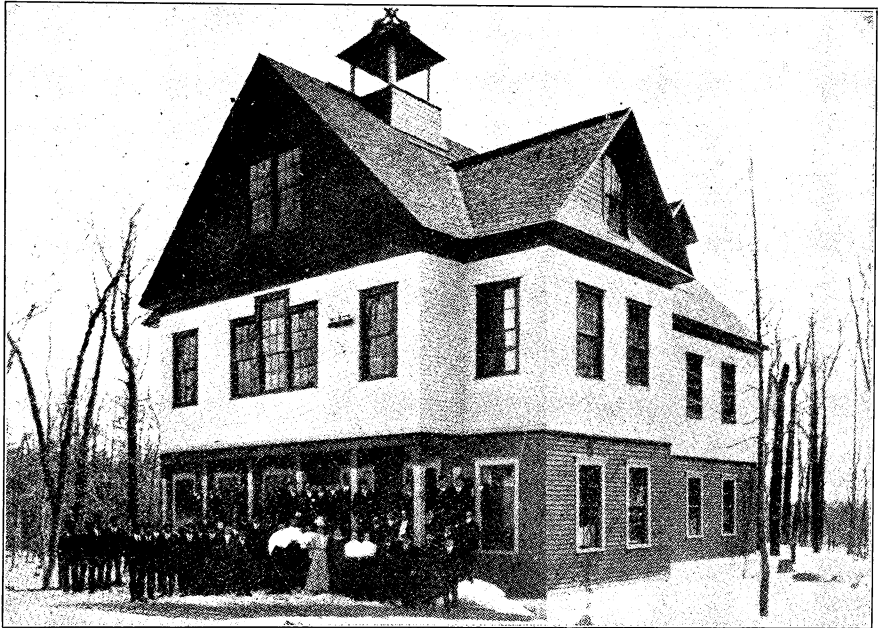


Fig. 7—"Kyntäjä" Temperance Hall, Painesdale, Michigan.

experiences and sentiments in the formation of new personality in the process of adjustment, the temperance hall came into existence. In it he sang his folksongs, played his national games, recited his stories and poems, acted his plays. In brief, the hall became a valuable social center where the native born came again in contact with the adult newcomer. This sort of inter-communication was of mutual benefit for the both. The former was enriched by idealism through native songs and games; the latter by acquisition of new customs. Even the names of these societies such as *Koitto*, "The Morning Twilight;" *Onni*, "Luck;" *Pohjan Tähti*, "The

North Star;" *Hyvä Toivo*, "Good Hope;" *Säde*, "Ray;" *Soihtu*, "The Torch," imply that their work and aim was far reaching, idealistic.

Later on temperance societies established schools for children for the purpose of disseminating information about the liquor traffic. Libraries consisting of temperance literature, periodicals, newspapers and fiction were founded in conjunction with each society. Musical and recreational activities were kept alive by glee and athletic clubs, by bands and concerts. Many societies published temperance literature, financed lectures in the English and Finnish languages, and continually kept on the alert on the enforcement of prohibition laws.

In various activities Finnish was mainly used, the language difficulty here again necessitating it. Nevertheless, these societies have co-operated with the Anti-Saloon League in carrying on the fight against the liquor traffic. Moreover, the Anti-Saloon League has infused Americanism into the Finnish temperance societies through literature and lectures. It is due to this co-operation that these societies in their methods of carrying on temperance propaganda in middle west and western states are more American than those in the East.<sup>1</sup>

The socialist societies are working independently of other organizations. Their program, of course, lays emphasis on labor and its relation to capital. Many a society has been under the leadership of those who were forced to leave their mother country or who either came here at their own free will. Some of these native leaders have had no deeper insight into American life, its laws and institutions. And yet with their ideas of internationalism and other "isms" they have posed as reformers of American social conditions. They have succeeded in gathering a considerable number of less thoughtful countrymen to rally around them and these victims have become mere satellites about their blind leaders. Regardless of their shortcomings through various publications and immediate contact with American labor leaders the socialist group has absorbed, digested and borrowed ideas and methods from American labor organizations. Whatever, then, good or bad in American labor theories they have been accepted as authoritative by their rank and file. The socialist organizations as well as other societies came into existence to satisfy various group interests. Although national characteristics have predominated in both the temperance and socialist societies, yet they have acted as a compromising medium in an indirect way between the two sets of attitudes in Americanizing the newcomer.

1. According to Mr. H. Moilanen, who has been an active leader in temperance work among the Finnish people.

## VII.

## CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES.

The native cultural and educational institutions seem to rise in response to spiritual needs, especially in such immigrant groups where national consciousness has been intensified by a high level of common education or cultural ideals of the home country. This appears to hold true of the Finns also. As their number increased their desire to satisfy intellectual wants resulted in the establishment of a denominational school. In 1896 Suomi College and Theological Seminary was founded in Hancock (Fig. 8). The original idea of the college was to prepare ministers of the gospel to serve their countrymen. This step, it was thought, was necessary since the ministers who came over from Finland did not find conditions satisfactory to remain here any length of time. "The English language is used as a medium of instruction in the majority of subjects, the exceptions being in the Finnish language and literature and Christianity and all the subjects in the Theological departments where the Finnish naturally occupies a very prominent position in the course.

"The institution takes into consideration the requirements of an American education at the same time cherishing the heritage of the Old Fatherland."<sup>1</sup> Recent development of the college, however, indicate that American ideals and language are gaining more ground that the Finnish language, literature and history will have the same place in its curriculum as the German or French language and literature has in American preparatory schools.

The faculty consists of about 12 instructors, total annual attendance ranging from 115 to 145 students. Its financial support come through donations and solicitations, primarily from the members of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church.

There are skeptical opinions as to the influence of denominational schools in immigrant groups. Some hold the opinion that they perpetuate racial boundaries; others again consider them to be means of enriching American culture. Each one may pass his judgment upon the matter according to his mental attitude. The college under consideration seems to have become a force in the adaptation of the newcomer whatever its original aim may have been. In the organization of religious work the college has exerted a powerful influence. The ministers trained in it have learned

1. Bulletin of Suomi College and Theological Seminary 1918-1919 pp. 8, 9.

the English language and the American viewpoint in church work. In other words, it has tended to demolish and to destroy old ways of thinking and formalism through educational channels. The institution also has acted as a medium in the dissemination of American principles through nationalist leadership. Its graduates of various departments have played an important role directly or indirectly in the Americanization process of community life. Numerous teachers in public schools have received their preparatory training in the college and they, knowing the idiosyncracies of their people, have been able to approach them with effective results. American influences have been thus brought more readily home. The school, furthermore, has prepared many newcomers for American citizenship by teaching the language of the country and its history.

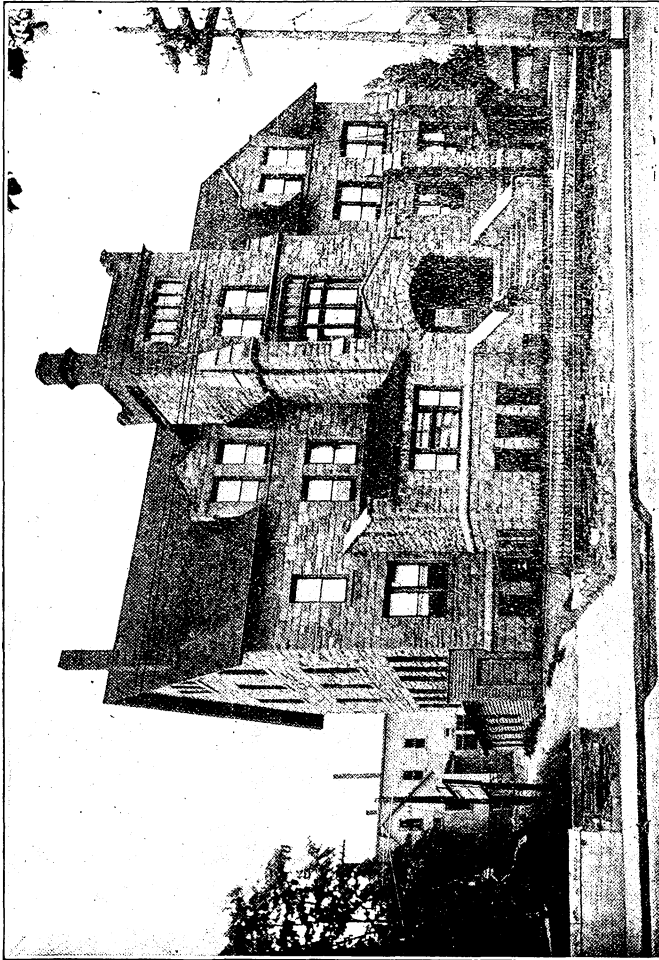


Fig. 8—Suomi College and Theological Seminary, Hancock, Michigan.

Thus so long as the college is co-operating with American institutions, so long as immigration is continuing, if the true American spirit permeates the school and Americanism is paramount, it is an invaluable means in the adjustment of the newcomer to the new environment.

The educational aspirations of the Finn are further evidenced by the native press. There are two newspapers and several periodicals published in the county. The newspapers are Republican in tone and circulate not only in the county but all over the United States and in foreign countries where Finns are living. The first page of the paper is usually devoted to general news which often are translations from American newspapers or



Fig. 9— A mixed choir which is found almost in every Finnish Community.

reproductions from those coming from the home country. The editorial page consists of comments on social, economic, political or religious issues about America, Finland or some other country. There is also a section comprising letters from readers in various communities all over the country. These letters reflect mostly on primary group events such as visits, weddings, funerals, accidents. The rest of the paper is devoted to advertisements.

The nationalist sentiment seems to run throughout the paper, but at the same time it has its share in moulding the newcomer's mind to see and to judge things according to new standards. The native press keeps him in-



formed about public questions, political and civic duties. Such information in turn tends to change his attitude of mind in order that he may have a part in the formation of public opinion. Through the native press the newcomer comes within the reach of the state and federal officials in their efforts to convey American principles.

Concerts and socials form still another branch of educational activities. They are held in the evening. The program is selected to suit the occasion. It may consist of speeches, instrumental numbers and poems. If the occasion is an unusual one some prominent person of the community will deliver the principal address in English. Valuable aid in these gatherings is often given by numerous glee clubs. It happens that five or six different choirs participate in the rendition of the program (Fig. 9). They sing mostly native songs, sometimes supplementing their program with American songs. In general the atmosphere in these socials and concerts is serious. They often become the climax of long repressed memories, sentiments and emotions about the old country.

As already mentioned, although cultural and educational institutions among the Finns arose to satisfy certain wants, yet to keep pace with the growing demands of those who were forming new viewpoints, creating new desires about new conditions, they have become to a certain extent forces of Americanization.

## VIII.

## PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS.

The newcomer's interest in politics is generally a later development in his new environment. To exercise full rights of citizenship he is to go through the process of naturalization. It adds new obligations and rights to the shoulders of the immigrant and acts as an incentive to a greater sharing in the common life. But the process in itself does not necessarily transform him into an American. Emotionally or sentimentally he may still be bound to his native country, but the public interests at large affecting his economic status or other questions that are of immediate concern to him, compel him to participate in a wider field of public activities.

Unlike the Irish or English immigrants who, on their arrival to this country, plunge directly into politics, the Finn did not find much interest in it. The language difficulty, no doubt, was one reason for his laxity. On the other hand, his lack of interest can be traced back to his old country where he was under different political institutions and rules by foreign sovereigns.

During recent years, however, the Finn has taken more interest in the administration of local and national affairs. Unfortunately, the lack of co-operation in his own group has impeded his political career. Some have succeeded in holding the offices of mayor, of county and township clerk, of supervisor, of township treasurer, and of highway commissioner. In politics he does not commit himself to any particular party. He seems to lay emphasis on the aspirant's personal qualifications as an office holder and on the issues on which he is making his campaign. Very indicative of this was the birth of the Progressive Party with the late Theodore Roosevelt, who is much admired by the Finns, as its leader. The majority of the Finnish voters were his supporters. Nominally, of course, the Finn is Republican. This seems to be accountable to the fact that many still remember president Cleveland's administration with its accompanying bad times. Hence some think that the democratic president means an empty dinner pail and unprosperous times. Moreover, the native press has its influence in moulding his political ideas. Practically all Finnish newspapers are leaning toward the Republican party in their sentiments.

The Prohibition party also has won supporters among the Finns. Many of them became convinced that it is through political action only that their hopes in combatting the liquor traffic could be realized. "That's the only

party with real issues. I have voted for the Republican candidates, but I found out that I was fooled. I shall support the Prohibition party until the liquor traffic is brought to an end," exclaimed an elderly man. Another man said that he was not particular about party lines in local politics, but in national elections the Prohibition party was his choice. The socialists naturally follow their own leaders. Only a few are supporting the Democratic party.

In local politics when no vital issues are at stake, according to his opinion, the Finn still remains somewhat indifferent. In national elections, on the other hand, he often displays over-enthusiasm. When he becomes convinced about a certain issue he carries it through at any cost. No stump speeches of efflorescent rhetoric can change his mind. Meetings are held in crowded halls, speeches are made in the English and Finnish languages.

## IX.

## TRADITIONS.

The adaptation of the adult newcomer to his new environment, despite accelerating forces, can never become complete in his life time. His reaction patterns still seek to respond to those physical, social, and idealistic stimuli which surrounded him during his formative stage of mind. Thus traditions, although Americanization forces have carried on their mission to a considerable extent in the individual's life, tend to remain in one's consciousness. During the moment of emotional excitement, for instance, his native language in his own group may be of great value to him because it is this language that possess all the delicate shades, vibrations, and colorings implanted in it through the mother's cradle songs or added to it by a multitude of childhood experiences. This explains why Finnish, for instance, is used so widely together with English. The native tongue is mixed with English words and phrases and it is more of negative value as soon as English becomes habitual in every day use.

As regards wearing apparel some noticeable traditions are still maintained. The use of a kerchief is very common among women, especially among some religious sect in which both men and women, like the Puritans, lay a great emphasis on simplicity of dress. Women's attitude of adhering to this usage without religious motives can be attributed to their previous environment. In early days it was thought that the wearing of a hat did not belong to the peasant woman. It was a thing worn by educated ladies or by those who thought they belonged to upper classes. Hence the custom still prevalent.

Women in rural districts wear skirts, waists, etc., resembling those used in Finland while the servant maids seem to accept American fashions readily. Some men in farming districts cling to their home-made boots which they claim are very comfortable.

Table setting and food cooking is done after the American and Finnish style. Sour milk, certain varieties of pies and bread and beef stew are some of the delicacies that the Finn still prefers. One gentleman of prominent position said: "I have no other old traditions that I like to perpetuate except that I like to eat salt salmon. It is just as appetizing at the breakfast table as it is at supper time." Another man holding a political office added: "At the time we came to America my mother learned to prepare and cook American dishes from our neighbors who were our best friends.

And queer as it may appear our neighbors learned to eat Finnish dishes from us. My mother used to take samples to them and they in exchange brought us their samples. Thus we learned many new things in cookery by mutual exchange. Our neighbors also learned to eat Finnish rye bread and coffee toast. They even learned to use the Finnish bathhouse."

In conjunction with other food habits coffee drinking might be mentioned. The Finn drinks coffee four or five times a day. And when a visitor comes the very first thing he does to express his hospitality is to offer him coffee with cake or cookies. Sometimes soft drink or fruits take the place of coffee.

The most important religious holidays are still celebrated in rural districts and even in towns. John Babbist's day, Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, etc., are among those celebrated. The Shrove Tuesday is spent in sleigh riding or in the evening in a social gathering.

Historical traditions are perpetuated by various ways. Speeches in socials and picnics, for instance, may consist of some phase of the Finnish history of laudatory remarks of the people for its heroic stand against foreign oppression. Finnish culture, literature, music and art are also plainly emphasized. Just as proud as the people seem to be of their composer Jean Sibelius, who has depicted national characteristics in music they are of their national epic poem the *Kalevala*. The secret society "The Knights of Kaleva" is especially concentrating its efforts to make the significance of this epic poem known.

Then there is a peculiar nationalist institution, the Finnish bathhouse, the use of which, perhaps, is the most striking tradition. The building itself varies in construction and size. Within it in one corner there is an oven-like structure or "stove" built of stones and bricks. As soon as the stones upon the oven are heated and both warm and cold water supplied the bathhouse is ready for occupancy. About two or three feet high from the floor around the wall is a platform with benches on which the bather may sit while steaming himself. Some small bucketfuls of water thrown on the heated stones fills the room with steam. The bathing is then performed in a condensed heat by beating the body with a whisk made of birch, maple or cedar branches. After the body has received its proper share in the steam, washing and dressing is finished downstairs or in an adjoining room. Many elderly people use this sort of bath for almost all kinds of bodily ailments, as the only real remedy. There are professional bathhouse owners who keep such places for public use. Curiously enough, the use of the Finnish bathhouse is common even among Americans.

Some of these traditions are as yet perpetuated by the native born, but the change of environment from purely Finnish communities to more heterogeneous groups and the diminution of those forces that tend to keep up old customs, will no doubt, gradually do away with them.

## X.

## AMALGAMATION AND ASSIMILATION.

The Finnish nationality forms the predominating majority of the foreign elements in the county. The Thirteenth Census gives 11,536 foreign born Finns, the next largest group being that of the Canadian-French with 4,110. No reliable statistics are available as to the present composition of the population in the county. We can, however, approximate the number of Finns including foreign and native born as one-third of the total population. Due to the great fecundity of the stock the number of Finns is increasing rapidly. In 1917 the county birth registration showed that out of 2,529 births there were 879 or 34.7 per cent of the Finnish parentage. Table IV based on a Hancock school census shows a steadily growing increase of Finnish children in public schools in the city of Hancock.

TABLE IV.

Showing the year, actual number of children, total number of per cent of Finnish children in Hancock public schools.

Year	Actual No. of children	Finnish children	Per cent of Finnish children
1911	1,329	458	34.4
1912	1,389	508	36.5
1913	1,415	546	38.5
1914	1,580	631	39.9
1915	1,477	691	46.7
1916	1,476	796	53.9

These figures give an idea of the ever-increasing number of Finnish element in the population. No doubt, these numbers will make us ask as to how these children as well as those of other nationalities can be digested into one homogeneous nation. The public school is the most effective dynamo in transfusing into these future Americans real American spirit. So far as the native born is concerned there is no difficulty in the process of racial mixture. As to the adult newcomer the preceding chapters have attempted to analyze the various forces and techniques in his adjustment to new conditions. Since the process of amalgamation is biological it is possible only when the adult newcomer, at least, partly has modified his ways so as to think and to act like an American. Racial mixture is a

conscious blending of different national elements into one nation. Some statistics based on marriage records<sup>1</sup> indicate to what extent inter-marriage is taking place among the Finnish nationality. In 1917 there were 84 native born young men of Finnish parentage who married native born girls of their own nationality; 57 young men of foreign Finnish parentage married native and foreign born girls of Finnish parentage; 18 American married native born girls of Finnish descent. 4 native born young men men of Finnish parentage married American girls; 4 Swedes married Finnish girls. The record goes on showing that the Finnish blood was mixing with the American born of the Croatian, Italian, Norwegian, Austrian, French, English, Canadian and German parentages. A Finnish girl married a Mexican, both of them scarcely being able to express their thoughts to one another through the English language. Marriage, however, took place and their neighbors say "they are getting along fine." Racial boundaries do not seem to prevent amalgamation of the Finn.

His willingness to demolish racial limits, to accommodate those he comes in contact with, is furthermore, manifested by the simplification of his name or direct adoption of American name instead of the old one. Very characteristic of such changes are the following samples:

Ala	became	Alla	Lehto	became	Grove
Harju	became	Haryu	Mäki	became	Mackay
Harju	or	Hario	Mäki	or	Mackey
Harju	or	Harris	Mäki	or	Hill
Harju	or	Hary	Manninen	became	Mannigan
Joki	became	Yokie	Moilanen	became	Moilan
Järvi	became	Järvey	Mänty	became	Pine
Järvi	or	Järvis	Niemi	became	Point
Järvi	or	Lake	Oinas	became	Oynas
Kasi	became	Casey	Parkkila	became	Parker
Keihänen	became	Keyanen	Pelto	became	Field
Kieri	became	Keary	Piira	became	Perry
Korpi	became	Korby	Takala	became	Tackla
Lahti	became	Bay	Tolonen	became	Tolen
Laine	became	Line	Turunen	became	Turren
Laitinen	became	Laitey	Vaara	became	Warren
Lassi	became	Lassey	Vainio	became	Vaineo

Assimilation, on the contrary, is psychic or spiritual process depending very largely on personal training as well as social conditions. Through social inheritance the newcomer most readily acquires "likemindedness" or national self-consciousness necessary for the homogeneous nation. In the case of the Finn the environmental factors and similarity of cultural institutions of the old country with those of America facilitate his assimilation. The fusion of his mental traits and cultural ideals seems to be just as rapid as his amalgamation. His dilatory ways of going at the thing is changing

1. Record of Marriages, Houghton County, 1917.

to promptness and punctuality; his extreme individualism to co-operation; his obstinacy to pliability; his meditation to vivid expression; his reticence to talkativeness. The bigness of American life in its industrial, economic and cultural aspects hasten the blending of the two civilizations. Such remarks as "to go to Finland would not come in'o consideration," or "one must live according to the customs of the coun'ry or else he must go back to the old country," are expressive of the fact that his sympathies lie with the land of his adoption. In general racial mixture and fusion of cultural ideals are so rapid among the Finns that if immigration would cease for one generation there would hardly be any trace left of the Finnish nationality.



Fig. 10—A group of bright-eyed youngsters on way to school  
Otter Lake, Michigan.



## XI.

## CONCLUSION.

The preceding study may be summarized in brief as follows: The Finn migrated here on account of economic and political causes. Upon his arrival to America in the process of adaption there was first the stage of expectation with its positive and negative results, then dissolution of his old ideals, standards and customs through contact with American life and finally, gradual adjustment to new conditions. Mining was his first occupation, but it was and still is an intermediary step to agriculture which will be his future occupation. Through economic activities especially in business life he is adapting himself quicker to the new environment than through nationalistic, religious or cultural institutions which on one hand are means of spiritual self-expression, and which to a considerable degree became Americanizing forces on the other hand. Until recent years politics has been a side issue to him due to the language difficulty and previous political situation in the old country, but his interest in it is growing rapidly. Some old traditions and customs are still maintained, some of them are even being accepted by other nationalities of American birth, but these traditions are gradually vanishing. His amalgamation and assimilation is so swift that he will not present any conflicting racial problem in the future.

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